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Extension Service - War Food Administration

W A R T I M E E X T E N S I O N W O R K

SUMMARY OF EXTENSION WORK, TECHNIQUES, AND RESULTS
BASED ON STATE REPORTS

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Some items in this week's summary:

Frozen-food leader training school held for agents
and commercial and community representatives.
Advantages of cooperatives pointed out by State extension
director.

4-H Club girls utilize scrap lumber in overcoming furni-
ture shortage.

State reports vegetable pest situation for year generally
favorable.

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MASSACHUSETTS
November 10, 1944

Cooperatives.- Addressing conference of Eastern States Farmers' Exchange at Boston,
Director Munson cited following services cooperative may give to agriculture.

1. Its active and progressive leadership brings improved methods of production and distribution into general use, not only for benefit of membership of co-operative, but for entire agricultural community.
2. Cooperative introduces methods of operation that reduce production and marketing risks and create more stable economy. This benefits agricultural industry and also tradesmen in other fields.
3. Cooperative brings about more efficient and less costly distribution, both in procuring supplies and in marketing members' products.
4. Cooperative provides for orderly marketing and purchasing of supplies, which tends to stabilize farm prices. Thus one of its functions is to eliminate minor fluctuations in farm prices.
5. As an organized program it leads in field of purchasing and marketing farm products in its community.

Cooperatives also carry responsibility for organizing and conducting their business in interests of general public in following ways:

1. Improving quality of food produced by its members and marketed for them.
2. Fostering acceptable and relatively high standardization of quality in food products.

3. Practicing fair trading on basis of inspection, official weights, and clear labeling of processed products.
4. Locating and providing needed storage and processing facilities to reduce food spoilage to minimum.
5. Reducing transportation costs by pooling facilities among members and individual purchasers.
6. Reducing credit costs in agricultural operations and returning savings to farmer members.

Doing business cooperatively is democratic procedure in following ways:

1. Membership control over policies and general management.
2. Cooperative activities with governmental agencies.
3. Carrying on of active program with community, civic groups, and organizations.
4. Bringing about closer contacts between general public and agricultural industry.
5. Further strengthening and securing family farm unit as basis of American agriculture.

Farm labor.- Massachusetts farmers have virtually completed harvest of all crops. Seasonal labor force included Victory Farm Volunteers, Women's Land Army, townspeople, Jamaicans, and German prisoners of war. Current need is for year-round help on dairy and poultry farms, dairy farms in particular. Newfoundlanders have helped but have not been numerous enough to meet dairymen's needs.

Poultry.- Poultry farms in sections of State are recovering from effects of September hurricane. Some farms have been hit and badly damaged twice in 6 years. College workers studying damage found indications that buildings lacking in anchor bolts and bracing were most severely damaged. Most poultrymen are finding means for rebuilding, but all destroyed buildings may not be replaced.

Poultry industry has been rather completely filmed by Extension Service during past year. Movies and colored still pictures on breeding, labor saving, marketing, eggs, and general subjects can be borrowed by other States. The Massachusetts poultry program has plenty of visual aids for winter meetings.

Adjustments in numbers of layers and meat birds are taking place. "Back-yarders" are dropping out, and part-time poultrymen cutting down. Reduction amounts to about 15 percent. Attendance at meetings continues good, but does not show former enthusiasm.

Sales of hatching eggs have been fair during year. Many new flocks have been added to pullorum lists and some renewed interest in "approved grade" has been shown. Flock owners are attempting to put flocks in shape to meet demands of hatcherymen.

Eggs and poultry have sold well at retail. Small eggs are beginning to be removed from markets to be frozen and they will not be in circulation as shell eggs to pull down price of larger eggs. Throughout industry changes in marketing are taking place. Flock owners are putting in quick-freezing units and are dressing roasters, broilers, and turkeys when they reach prime condition and holding them for sale to retail trade. One auction has installed modern killing equipment and another may install equipment for shell treating. Industry is preparing to meet changing demands and trends in marketing.

Vegetable pest situation in 1944.- In general, damage from insect pests differed only slightly from average of recent seasons. Diseases, however, as a whole caused decidedly less damage to vegetable crops than in most past years, owing to unusually dry weather during growing season. This was particularly true for most leaf, stem, and fruit spotting diseases such as leaf blights of celery, carrots, tomatoes; bacterial blight of beans; bottom rot of lettuce; blackleg and black rot of cabbage and cauliflower; corn smut; and late blight fruit rot of tomato.

Bacterial wilt of cucurbits was unusually scarce because of light infestation of its principal insect disseminator, striped cucumber beetle. Mosaic of cucumber and melons was more damaging than usual because aphids, an important spreading agent, were more numerous than usual on those crops. Blossom end rot of tomatoes was widespread and damaging. Corn smut was almost totally absent on many farms where it caused moderate to heavy losses in 1943.

An occasional abnormally heavy infection of following diseases was observed where overhead irrigation was practiced: Early and late blights of celery; *Cercospora* leaf spot of carrot; bacterial blight of shell beans; early blight of trellised tomatoes. A few instances of celery blights were encountered where no irrigation was practiced but where plant growth was interrupted by drought. Other isolated cases of severe damage, in absence of irrigation, involved following soil-borne diseases: Cabbage yellows; clubroot of cabbage; root rot and wilt of peas; scab of potato and carrot.

Damping-off in seedbeds and transplant flats was less troublesome last spring than usual, but there is marked need for wider use of such preventive measures as seed and soil treatments. Another practice neglected by some growers is crop rotation to avoid such diseases as cabbage yellows and clubroot; root rots of beans and peas; leaf blight of carrot; potato scab; wilts of eggplant and tomato; and leaf and fruit spotting diseases of cucumbers, squash, and melons.

Insects: In general, striped cucumber beetle appeared later and was less abundant than usual. Aphids were not so prevalent and devastating as in 1943. Mexican bean beetle was about normal in early season but very abundant later. Infestation was rather spotty, and many plantings escaped with little damage.

European corn borer, in spite of heavy carry-over of larvae from previous season and slight winter mortality, caused very light damage in first brood owing largely to weather. Considerable late brood, however, caused plenty of injury to late plantings. Flea beetles generally were heavy throughout season on susceptible garden crops, but caused less damage than usual in some large commercial plantings of potatoes. Beet and spinach leaf miner caused extensive damage. Many spinach plantings were ruined. Cabbage worm and cabbage maggot were about normal in State as a whole. Corrosive sublimate and other protective measures kept cabbage maggot in better control than in 1943. Native stalk borer caused more complaints and was more generally abundant than normally, especially in home gardens and small plantings. Seed corn maggot, primarily pest of lima beans, caused less damage than in two previous seasons.

Minimum standards for farms.- Departments of farm management and agricultural economics have collaborated in preparing minimum standards for four types of farms--market garden, fruit, dairy, and poultry. Size, diversification, sites, buildings

and equipment, type of soil, value and indebtedness, production efficiency, crop system, and location are considered. Score card to be used by prospective purchaser is included.

Dairying.- Necessity for getting last drop of milk possible is not so great as a year ago. As milk supply improves, good management is needed more.

Advantages of dairy farmer this year are: Sufficient dairy cow numbers so that poor producers can again be rigidly culled; much better outlook for concentrate feeds, both in quantity and quality, and possibly slight reduction in price; about 140 carloads of surplus potatoes allotted in every county for feeding; continuance of present milk prices at least until April.

On unfavorable side are: Shortage of hay or silage in many localities because of dry weather and September storm; continuing shortage of dairy herd improvement association supervisors; not enough farm help; lack of some items of equipment; presence of mastitis and Bang's disease and breeding troubles. To offset some disadvantages and make for more efficient management, it is planned to continue efforts to resume dairy herd testing; to provide dairy farm help; to locate sources of good hay for purchase over next few months; to get more herd owners to adopt improved milking methods; to try to determine definitely whether State-wide artificial breeding program can be adopted and maintained. In addition, State-wide plans are to be made for control of mastitis and other common troubles. Committee to work on these control plans represents State department of agriculture, breed and producer organizations, Farm Bureau, and State and county extension services.

VIRGINIA

November 1, 1944

Farm labor.- October had heaviest labor demand of any month since program started. Harvesting of fall truck crops, apples, and peanuts was at peak. Some crops in all three areas will be lost because of unfavorable weather, but demand for labor was practically met.

During month, approximately 3,000 prisoners of war were used from 12 camps, foreign labor from 9 camps, mountain labor from 2 camps, conscientious objectors from 2 camps, and convict labor from 21 camps. School children were used in most fruit areas to help pick and pack apples, but worked mainly in packing sheds. Girls from Sweet Briar College and Hollins College volunteered to help pick apples in nearby areas and were reported to have done a fine job.

Peak harvest for calendar year is now over. Most of foreign workers are being shipped to Florida to help with harvest there. Many of prisoner-of-war camps will remain, and prisoners will be used to cut pulpwood during winter.

Agricultural engineering.- Frozen-food Leader Training School was sponsored by Extension Service at V.P.I., directed by agricultural engineering and home demonstration departments. Two-day school was held to review latest engineering principles, methods of operation, and procedures employed in preservation of food by freezing. Freezer lockers and home freezers were discussed. Meeting was attended by 250 leaders, including farm and home agents, locker-plant operators and owners, electric service organization representatives, dealers, contractors, representative of governmental agencies, and community leaders.

Poultry.- During month specialists worked with farm and home agents in 26 counties; gave 49 demonstrations, attended by 407 persons; made 91 individual farm visits; and held 13 meetings attended by 459. Most demonstrations concerned culling, and included discussion on proper flock management.

Livestock.- Total of 5,305 head of feeder calves were sold through 15 cooperative sales during month. Visits were made to counties carrying breeding pig projects and winners were determined. Heifer calves will be awarded as first prize in each county, and baby chicks as second and third prizes.

Agronomy.- Agronomist attended meeting of State committee on 8-point milk program to make plans for next quarter. Information material was issued on fertilizer situation, need for ordering fertilizer early, and importance of seeding wheat in time for maximum yields. Agronomist discussed Some Problems Farmers May Have To Face After the War at meetings in Rockbridge and Alleghany Counties.

Home demonstration.- Home demonstration clubwomen in Amherst and Caroline Counties held 3-day tailoring demonstrations in which new suits and coats were made and used ones remade. "Civvies" no longer fitting boy in uniform were remade for mother or high-school sister. Other garments were turned to get different effect in weave and color and to change points of wear or eliminate weak spots. Such tailoring work helps families to meet fabric and manpower shortages and maintain standard of dress during wartime.

Botetourt County 4-H girls helped their families overcome furniture shortage by utilizing every available piece of scrap lumber in making bedside bookshelf tables. Girls found that there are other uses for bookshelves that are built table height; some use them at each end of studio couch with lamp on each. Shelves can be adjusted to make room for radio and games.

Where lumber is available, shelves are sometimes made longer to provide space for books and magazines kept in living room. These 4-H girls have built and finished 153 bookshelf tables and expect to reach 200 by end of year.

